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141455Z Nov 01

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ACTION AF-00

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	H-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00	L-00	AC-01	NSAE-00
	NSCE-00	OIC-02	OMB-01	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00
	P-00	SP-00	SS-00	STR-00	TRSE-00	T-00	USIE-00
	PMB-00	PRM-00	DRL-02	G-00	SAS-00	/007W	

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FM AMEMBASSY HARARE  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0273  
INFO NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY  
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 HARARE 003400

SIPDIS

NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR JENDAYI FRAZER  
BRUSSELS ALSO FOR USEU  
LONDON FOR GURNEY  
PARIS FOR NEARY  
NAIROBI FOR PFLAUMER

E.O. 12958: DECL. 11/14/11

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SUBJECT: WAR VETERAN MURDER SPARKS GOZ CRACKDOWN ON MDC AND UNREST  
IN BULAWAYO

CLASSIFIED BY POLITICAL SECTION CHIEF MATT HARRINGTON. REASONS:  
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1.5 (B) AND (D).

SUMMARY  
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[1](#)1. (C) GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS HAVE BLAMED THE MURDER OF A SENIOR WAR  
VETERAN IN BULAWAYO ON THE MOVEMENT FOR DEMOCRATIC CHANGE (MDC)  
AND HAS MOVED TO ARREST A NUMBER OF PARTY OFFICIALS. MDC  
SECRETARY-GENERAL WELSHMAN NCUBE REJECTED THE ALLEGATIONS AS

SIPDIS

"UTTER RUBBISH," WHILE MDC PRESIDENT MORGAN TSVANGIRAI EXPRESSED  
SYMPATHY TO THE WAR VETERAN'S FAMILY AND URGED THE POLICE TO  
ARREST THE REAL PERPETRATORS. MDC MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT DAVID  
COLTART IS CONVINCED THE GOVERNMENT IS TRYING TO FRAME HIM FOR THE  
MURDER, FEARS THAT HIS LIFE IS IN DANGER, AND ASKED THE USG TO  
TELL THE GOZ THAT WE WILL HOLD IT RESPONSIBLE IF ANYTHING HAPPENS  
TO COLTART OR OTHER MDC OFFICIALS. (WE ARE MAKING THIS POINT TO  
THE GOVERNMENT TODAY.) WE ARE CONCERNED THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S  
INFLAMMATORY RHETORIC AND WIDESPREAD ARRESTS OF MDC OFFICIALS  
COULD SPARK UNREST IN BULAWAYO. END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (C) THE BODY OF CAIN NKALA, CHAIRMAN OF THE BULAWAYO WAR  
VETERANS ASSOCIATION, WAS FOUND IN A SHALLOW GRAVE 40 KM SOUTHWEST  
OF BULAWAYO ON NOVEMBER 13. NKALA HAD BEEN ABDUCTED FROM HIS HOME  
ON NOVEMBER 5 BY TEN MEN REPORTEDLY ARMED WITH AK-47'S AFTER A  
STRUGGLE IN WHICH HE AND HIS WIFE WERE INJURED. AT THE TIME OF  
HIS ABDUCTION, NKALA WAS FACING CHARGES IN THE JUNE 2000  
DISAPPEARANCE OF PATRICK NABANYAMA, THE POLLING AGENT FOR MDC  
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT DAVID COLTART, WHOSE BODY HAS NEVER BEEN  
FOUND. COLTART TOLD US, HOWEVER, THAT NKALA SEEMED TO HAVE  
EXPERIENCED A CHANGE OF HEART IN RECENT WEEKS, AS HE WAS ASSISTING  
WHITE COMMERCIAL FARMERS IN MEDIATING DISPUTES ON THEIR PROPERTIES  
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AND MAY HAVE REVEALED TO A JOURNALIST THE WHEREABOUTS OF  
NABANYAMA'S BODY.

OMINOUS GOVERNMENT RHETORIC  
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[1](#)3. (U) THE WEEK-AND-A-HALF BETWEEN NKALA'S ABDUCTION AND THE  
DISCOVERY OF HIS BODY WAS MARKED BY OMINOUS STATEMENTS FROM  
GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS. IN INFLAMMATORY REMARKS ON A NATIONAL NEWS  
BROADCAST ON NOVEMBER 13, MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS JOHN NKOMO  
BLAMED THE MDC'S LEADERSHIP FOR THE MURDER. PRIOR TO THE  
DISCOVERY OF THE BODY, HARARE WAR VETERAN LEADER JOSEPH CHINOTIMBA  
CALLED THE ABDUCTION A "DECLARATION OF WAR." VICE-PRESIDENT MSIKA  
THREATENED VIOLENCE AGAINST THOSE RESPONSIBLE, VOWING THAT "IF  
THEY ARE LOOKING FOR A BLOODBATH THEY WILL CERTAINLY GET IT."  
OBERT MPOFU, GOVERNOR OF MATABELELAND NORTH PROVINCE, IN WHICH  
BULAWAYO IS LOCATED, BLAMED A "THIRD FORCE" OF FORMER RHODESIAN  
TROOPS, WHICH HE SAID WAS WORKING TO DESTABILIZE THE GOVERNMENT.

A SENIOR ZANU-PF PROVINCIAL OFFICIAL URGED THAT WAR VETERANS BE ARMED SO THAT THEY COULD PROTECT THEMSELVES AGAINST FURTHER ABDUCTIONS. SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE ZIMBABWE NATIONAL WAR VETERANS ASSOCIATION ANDY MHLANGA CLAIMED THAT NKALA WAS KIDNAPPED BY MDC SUPPORTERS AND SAID, SINCE WAR VETERANS ARE "GOOD" AT WAR, THE OPPOSITION PARTY "SHOULD NOT BLAME US FOR WHAT HAPPENS NEXT."

CRACKDOWN ON MDC  
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14. (C) THE THREATENING STATEMENTS HAVE BEEN ACCOMPANIED BY WIDESPREAD ARRESTS OF MDC OFFICIALS, POLICE RAIDS OF THE PARTY'S OFFICES IN HARARE AND BULAWAYO AND OF THE HOUSES OF MDC LEADERS,  
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AND VIOLENT ANTI-MDC DEMONSTRATIONS BY WAR VETERANS. TWO DAYS AFTER NKALA'S ABDUCTION, MORE THAN 75 HEAVILY-ARMED POLICE SPENT SEVERAL HOURS COMBING THE MDC'S HEADQUARTERS IN BULAWAYO IN WHAT THEY SAID WAS A SEARCH FOR NKALA. ON NOVEMBER 10, A GROUP OF 100 WAR VETERANS TRIED TO GAIN ENTRY TO THE MDC'S HARARE HEADQUARTERS. PREVENTED FROM DOING SO, THEY SPENT AN HOUR OUTSIDE ASSAULTING PEOPLE ENTERING AND LEAVING THE BUILDING, AND DAMAGING THE VEHICLE OF THE PARTY'S NATIONAL SPOKESMAN LEARNMORE JONGWE. SIX POLICE OFFICERS WHO WERE STATIONED OUTSIDE THE BUILDING, ACCORDING TO A SENIOR MDC OFFICIAL, DID NOTHING TO CONTROL THE CROWD UNTIL IT DISPERSED ON ITS OWN. ON NOVEMBER 12, POLICE ATTEMPTED TO SEARCH THE HARARE OFFICES OF SECRETARY-GENERAL WELSHMAN NCUBE AND NATIONAL COORDINATOR ISAAC MAPOSA, BUT THEY LEFT WHEN NCUBE, A PROFESSOR OF CONSTITUTIONAL LAW, INSISTED THAT THEY PRODUCE A SEARCH WARRANT.

15. (C) ACCORDING TO MDC INFORMATION OFFICER NKANYISO MAQEVA, AT LEAST TEN MDC OFFICIALS OF VARYING RANKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES HAVE BEEN ARRESTED DURING THE PAST WEEK. IT IS DIFFICULT, MAQEVA SAID, TO GET DETAILS ON ALL THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN ARRESTED, AS POLICE ARE REFUSING TO PROVIDE ANY INFORMATION AND, IN MOST CASES, HAVE BLOCKED ACCESS TO LEGAL COUNSEL. THE POLICE SEEM TO BE TARGETTING MDC LEADERS IN BULAWAYO, ALTHOUGH TWO PARTY OFFICIALS FROM THE

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ACTION AF-00

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FM AMEMBASSY HARARE  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0274  
INFO NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 03 HARARE 003400

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SUBJECT: WAR VETERAN MURDER SPARKS GOZ CRACKDOWN ON MDC AND UNREST IN BULAWAYO

HARARE AREA WERE ARRESTED EARLY IN THE MORNING OF NOVEMBER 14 -- A  
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DISTRICT SECRETARY FROM THE NEARBY TOWN OF CHITUNGWIZA AND A YOUTH LEADER FROM THE HIGH-DENSITY SUBURB OF ST. MARY'S. NOMA NABANYAMA, THE DAUGHTER OF PATRICK, WAS REPORTEDLY DETAINED ON NOVEMBER 12 AND HELD OVERNIGHT BY POLICE, WHO SEIZED HER PASSPORT AND ACCUSED HER OF LYING ABOUT HER FATHER'S DISAPPEARANCE. IN THE LAST TWO DAYS, THE HOUSES OF MDC NATIONAL TREASURER, FLETCHER DULINI, AND THE PARTY'S BULAWAYO ADMINSTRATOR, ZWELITHINI MSIMANGA, WERE SEARCHED WITHOUT WARRANTS.

MDC REACTION  
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16. (C) SECRETARY-GENERAL WELSHMAN NCUBE REJECTED ALLEGATIONS THAT THE MDC WAS BEHIND NKALA'S MURDER AS "UTTER RUBBISH." IN A CONVERSATION WITH US, HE SAID THE PARTY'S ENTIRE PROVINCIAL EXECUTIVE IN BULAWAYO HAS GONE INTO HIDING, AS HAVE TWO MDC CITY COUNCILLORS WHOSE HOUSES WERE DAMAGED BY WAR VETERANS WHO WENT ON

A RAMPAGE THE NIGHT OF NOVEMBER 13. HE CONDEMNED WHAT HE CALLED THE GOVERNMENT'S SELECTIVE APPLICATION OF THE LAW, AND POINTED OUT THAT AT LEAST SEVEN DETAINED MDC MEMBERS HAVE NOT BEEN BROUGHT TO COURT WITHIN THE 48-HOUR TIME PERIOD REQUIRED BY ZIMBABWEAN LAW. MDC PRESIDENT MORGAN TSVANGIRAI ISSUED A STATEMENT EXPRESSING SYMPATHY FOR THE NKALA FAMILY, CALLING ON THE POLICE TO FIND THE "REAL PERPETRATORS OF THIS CALLOUS CRIMINAL OFFENSE," AND CONDEMNING MINISTER NKOMO'S NOVEMBER 13 REMARKS AS INTENDED "TO WHIP UP EMOTIONS AND EXPLOIT POLITICALLY" NKALA'S DEATH. THE MDC HAS URGED THAT THE DETAINEES BE PLACED IN A LINEUP FOR IDENTIFICATION BY MRS. NKALA, SINCE SHE WITNESSED THE ABDUCTION, BUT MDC INFORMATION OFFICER NKANYISO MAQEVVA TOLD US THAT THE POLICE HAVE DECLINED TO DO SO.

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THREATS TO COLTART  
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17. (C) IN A NOVEMBER 14 MEETING WITH POLITICAL SECTION CHIEF REQUESTED URGENTLY BY DAVID COLTART, THE MDC MP SAID ZANU-PF IS TRYING TO FRAME HIM FOR NKALA'S MURDER AND EXPRESSED GRAVE CONCERN FOR HIS OWN SAFETY. COLTART RECALLED HIS TWENTY YEARS OF EXPERIENCE AS A HUMAN RIGHTS LAWYER AND SAID HE HAD ALWAYS HAD AND CONTINUED TO REJECT VIOLENCE. HE DID NOT EVEN OWN A GUN, HE SAID. COLTART WENT ON TO REPORT THAT HE HAD HEARD FROM THREE UNRELATED SOURCES THAT VICE-PRESIDENT MSIKA, JOHN NKOMO, GOVERNOR OBERT MPOFU, AND FORMER MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS AND CURRENT MEMBER OF THE ZANU-PF POLITBURO DUMISO DABENGWA, HAD AGREED IN A RECENT MEETING THAT COLTART'S "ELIMINATION" IS A NECESSARY PIECE OF THE RULING PARTY'S PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN STRATEGY. THE MDC MP SAID HE TOOK THIS THREAT SERIOUSLY AND FELT "EXTREMELY VULNERABLE." HE HAD EVEN BRIEFLY CONSIDERED WALKING INTO AN EMBASSY THAT MORNING AND REQUESTING POLITICAL ASYLUM. HE ASKED THAT THE USG CONVEY ITS CONCERN TO THE GOZ ABOUT THE INFLAMMATORY RHETORIC OF ITS SENIOR OFFICIALS AND TO EMPHASIZE THAT IT WOULD HOLD THE GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBLE IF ANYTHING HAPPENED TO HIM OR ANY OTHER MDC OFFICIAL. (COMMENT: WE HAD NEVER BEFORE SEEN COLTART IN SUCH AN AGITATED STATE. NORMALLY A CALM AND OPTIMISTIC MAN, EVEN WHEN UNDER SIGNIFICANT STRESS, HE WAS VERY BADLY SHAKEN IN THIS MEETING AND SEEMED UNSURE OF WHAT HIS NEXT STEPS SHOULD BE. HE WAS PARTICULARLY WORRIED ABOUT THE SAFETY OF HIS BULAWAYO-BASED FAMILY, INCLUDING HIS TWO-MONTH-OLD DAUGHTER. END COMMENT.)

UNREST IN BULAWAYO  
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18. (U) LATE IN THE AFTERNOON OF NOVEMBER 14, WE RECEIVED AN UNCONFIRMED BUT CREDIBLE REPORT FROM A JOURNALIST IN BULAWAYO OF ANTI-MDC VIOLENCE IN THAT CITY'S HIGH- AND MEDIUM-DENSITY SUBURBS. ACCORDING TO OUR SOURCE, WAR VETERANS HAVE BURNED HOUSES AND DESTROYED PROPERTY BELONGING TO MDC SUPPORTERS. THE SITUATION IN THE CITY IS REPORTED TO BE VERY TENSE, AND THE JOURNALIST TOLD US "I HAVE NEVER BEEN THIS FRIGHTENED FOR MY LIFE."

COMMENT  
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19. (C) NKALA'S CASE HAS GENERATED INTENSE INTEREST NATIONWIDE. IT IS NOT CLEAR WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS MURDER, AND WE DO NOT WANT TO SPECULATE UNTIL FURTHER INFORMATION BECOMES AVAILABLE. IN THE MEANTIME, IT IS WORTH NOTING THAT AK-47 RIFLES ARE NOT EASY TO OBTAIN -- ONLY MEMBERS OF THE SECURITY FORCES HAVE REGULAR ACCESS TO THEM -- AND THE ONES ALLEGEDLY USED DURING THE ABDUCTION HAVE APPARENTLY NOT BEEN FOUND, EVEN THOUGH THE ACCUSED ARE IN CUSTODY. WE ALSO FIND IT INTERESTING THAT MRS. NKALA HAS NOT SPOKEN PUBLICLY ABOUT HER HUSBAND'S CASE, AND THAT THE POLICE HAVE BEEN RELUCTANT TO SUBMIT THE SUSPECTS TO AN IDENTIFICATION LINEUP. IT IS CLEAR THAT, WHOEVER WAS RESPONSIBLE, THE GOZ SEEMS INTENT ON USING THIS CASE TO INTENSIFY ITS CRACKDOWN ON THE MDC AND ITS

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LEADERSHIP. WE ARE ALSO CONCERNED THAT THE INFLAMMATORY RHETORIC  
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OF GOZ OFFICIALS AND THE WIDESPREAD ARRESTS IN BULAWAYO COULD  
SPARK DEMONSTRATIONS BY LOCAL RESIDENTS, ELICITING A HEAVY-HANDED  
RESPONSE FROM SECURITY FORCES.

SULLIVAN

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